

Marilla
Conservation Advisory Board

December, 2005

Date: December 6, 2005

Members Present: Ralph Burch, Co-Chairman
Warren Cullen, Sr.
Dave Muench
Bud Pearce
Roger Gustavel

Members Absent: Leonard Janiga, Chairman
Diane Fronczek

Also in attendance: Councilman Warren Handley

Co Chair Ralph Burch opened the meeting in Leonard Janiga's absence at 6:35 PM.

Review of old business through the November meeting's minutes. After speaking with members of Kiwanis and Highway Supervisor Dave Pierce, Warren Cullen reported that the bridge at the Town Park Trail discussed at last months meeting is no longer intact and therefore ideas of moving it into place for trail extension are mute. We will seek construction of a new bridge, possibly by Boy Scout groups for next season.

Councilman Handley reported no approvals or discussion on the Berner Golf Course Project, as the November Town Planning Board Meeting was canceled.

After discussion of what our role as Conservation Advisory Board would be in the Berner project, Dave Muench expressed concerns of work that is being performed and who may be keeping watch on a project of this nature regarding the conservation and protection of the area's natural resources. Dave Muench also requested that the CAB should be more involved in the Berner Project, seeing as we are charged with protecting Marilla's natural resources. Ralph Burch suggested that the CAB should be involved now, not later, as the Planning Board is now working on the project. With all in agreement, we asked that Councilman Handley express to the Marilla Town Board, our desire to be a part of decision making in regard to the Berner Project.

Councilman Handley announced that the Marilla Town Code Book is currently being reorganized and that it has been expressed that the CAB's

current role description is satisfactorily written. CAB members should review the current code book and approve or suggest changes to the CAB's role while the opportunity exists.

In new business, Councilman Handley stated that he will be meeting with Mr. Behm of the NYS Ag/Markets department to review and discuss the process of the PACE program. Changes are needed to smooth out the process of closing these deals as past and present projects are costing too much in legal fees and taking far too long because of all the legalities and red tape involved.

Councilman Handley reported that there is a sizable amount of money leftover from an abandoned PACE grant and he has been actively seeking alternative land owners to utilize the funds. To date, he has had little success doing so. Councilman Handley however is hopeful that two PACE dealings that have been in the works for some time now may be able to close by the end of December. The two properties of Maelen Farms and Butch Wiggler, along with the recent contribution by the Gerhardts will protect more than 325 acres of rural, agricultural land in Marilla from future development.

Roger Gustavel briefed other members on his research for alternative agencies or groups to possibly help provide funding for protection and conservation of land in the town. Unfortunately most of the agencies are seeking land with historical or environmental value such as waterfront property or environmentally sensitive areas. Roger stated that most of these conservancies are privately funded. Roger did locate and attempt to contact the Land Trust Alliance, which is a national organization with regional chapters. The Land Trust Alliance lists among its goals to expand the pace of land conservation (through tax incentives), build strong land trusts and defend the permanence of land trusts. The LTA provides technical assistance to those individuals or groups seeking to conserve open space or environmentally sensitive areas. Roger will continue to seek agencies such as these for assistance.

Councilman Handley presented some plans from the Berner project to the CAB, such as an early version of the Sketch Plan Application for Housing Lot Layout and the latest Sketch Plan Submission for the Marilla Golf Development. The members of the CAB reviewed these plans while noting concerns of the impact this project might have in the area of Clinton Street between Two Rod and Town Line Roads.

At 7:45 Ralph Burch motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Warren Cullen. With all in favor, the meeting was adjourned.
Next meeting will be January 3, 2006 at 6:30PM.

Submitted by: member Roger Gustavel

